DOCUMENT RESUME

ED 163 398 CS 004 436

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TITLE The Classroom Teacher and the Reading Consultant: Cooperation at the Junior High Level.
PUB DATE May 78
NOTE 25p.; Paper presented at the Annual Meeting of the International Reading Association (23rd, Houston, Texas, May 1-5, 1978)

EDRS PRICE MF-$0.83 HC-$1.67 Plus Postage.
DESCRIPTORS *Content Reading; Cooperation; Educational Resources; *Inservice Teacher Education; Instructional Materials; Junior High Schools; Leadership Qualities; Organization; *Program Development; Program Evaluation; *Reading Consultants; *Reading Instruction; *Reading Programs; Training Objectives

ABSTRACT

Guidelines for establishing content area reading programs at the junior high school level are presented in this paper. Following an overview of the development of a content area reading program in Columbia, Missouri, in which inservice teacher education was provided, 31 guidelines are presented to aid a content area reading resource specialist in such areas as developing effective qualities and attitudes and dealing successfully with faculty and administration. Twenty-seven organizational guidelines are then listed; these deal with such topics as establishing the need and purpose of a content area reading program, writing program objectives, developing materials, integrating the program into the school curriculum, and promoting communication among teachers. The following four areas of emphasis in inservice programs for content area teachers are then discussed: assessment of students and materials, vocabulary teaching and reinforcement, reading comprehension, and study skills. Finally, strengths of the Columbia program--related to such aspects as teacher participation and attitudes and student improvement--are described, and a few concerns are noted. A list of publications, cassette tapes, and films useful in developing a content area reading program is appended. (GW)

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ED163398

The Classroom Teacher and the Reading Consultant: Cooperation at the Junior High Level

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and

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TO THE EDUCATIONAL RESOURCES INFORMATION CENTER (ERIC) AND USERS OF THE ERIC SYSTEM."

Paper presented at the Twenty Third annual convention of the International Reading Association, Houston, Texas, May 4, 1978

CS004436

I. Introduction

Please consider with us the following questions:

1. How would you define content area reading?
2. How would you select a person to be a building reading resource teacher?
3. How would you organize a content area reading program?

II. Overview of the Columbia, Missouri, Content Area Reading Program

We will define reading as a process which encompasses many of life's activities and is a central part of all content areas. Instruction in the use of this process we call reading, is important for all students--average and above-average as well as those students having reading difficulties.

By our definition, we do not believe that content area teachers can or should be expected to remediate reading problems of a severe nature. Content area reading is a total school reading program which helps all students.

In 1975, one of the junior high schools in Columbia, Missouri, underwent North Central Accreditation evaluation. A recommendation of that committee was that a program of content area reading be implemented. This recommendation, along with the concerns of teachers and administrators, led to the writing of a grant to provide in-service for junior high teachers in the area of content reading. Year one of the grant (1976-77) provided for the development of a guidebook to be used by the teachers. To select skills for each content area to be included in the guidebook, we asked two or three teachers from each content area to read selected excerpts from the literature pertaining to content area reading, then meet with the reading resource specialist to discuss and formulate eight to twelve specific skills for each content area. Forty-

eight hours of in-service were planned for the eighty-five teachers who volunteered to participate in this program. With the grant funds available, participants were reimbursed five dollars per hour for attendance at the workshops. Each of these eighty-five teachers was observed on six occasions by the building resource specialist and feedback was provided. The skills listed in the guidebook for a teacher's particular content area were the skills observed by the resource teacher.

The second year of the grant (1977-78) has provided thirty-two hours of in-service training for thirty more teachers, plus twenty-four hours of release time for forty teachers who had been in Phase 1 in 1976-77. This release time was spent in three-hour blocks of time once a month for eight months. During the release time, the content teachers worked with the building reading resource specialist developing lesson plans into which reading skills were built. Substitutes for these teachers were paid through grant funds. Secretarial help was also provided for these teachers.

During 1978-79 we will repeat Phase 1 of our program (the thirty-two hours of initial training) for thirty-five teachers--including some senior high teachers--and Phase 2 release time for twenty additional junior high teachers.

III. Training of a Content Area Reading Resource Specialist

One question that we frequently have been asked is: Was our graduate training relevant to our role in developing and implementing a content area reading program for our district? Without denying a great amount of on-the-job training, the answer is an unqualified Yes. We feel that our contact with the University of Missouri was most helpful in developing and maintaining the high quality of in-service training which our program has

provided. In the following areas our graduate training provided a solid base for our current positions as reading resource specialists.

1. Solid knowledge of content area reading skills
2. Familiarity with content area reading resources - the journals, texts, films, etc.
3. Professional development through participation in IRA and other professional organizations
4. Initial contact with the professors in the area of reading which provided us with guidance in program development, and assistance in writing our guidebook
5. Development of workshop skills
6. Encouragement for professional growth which we have attempted to emulate in our program
7. Solid background in reading assessment techniques

IV. Role of a Content Area Reading Resource Specialist

Basic to the content area reading program for an individual school or district is the selection of the reading specialist or content area teacher who will help develop the program and serve as a building resource specialist. Often a reading specialist or qualified content teacher who meets the requirements for a resource specialist is found within a building. There are many obvious advantages in selecting an "inside" teacher for this position. But, what happens if the resource specialist is brought into the school to develop and coordinate this program? Because we have been in both positions, it has been possible to devise a list of guidelines, based on experiences successful and not quite as successful, which would, perhaps, be useful for the resource specialist new to a school or a current staff member chosen to lead the program.

1. Enthusiasm, interest, leadership ability are qualities needed by the resource specialist.
2. Thorough knowledge of content area reading skills is necessary.
3. It is important to remember that content area teachers place their own subject as top priority.
4. It takes time for content teachers and administrators to understand the concept that reading is a process, not a subject. Do not expect immediate acceptance of this premise.
5. Have a knowledge of the techniques of public relations.
6. A background knowledge of selling techniques may be useful in content reading program development.
7. Be familiar with all available content area resources. This would include books, pamphlets, journal articles, films and tapes. Keep up with current publications dealing with content area reading.
8. It is helpful to be an experienced secondary content teacher with a solid background in reading.
9. The resource specialist should be willing to serve on any school committee and have a genuine interest and involvement in school activities.
10. The resource specialist should sincerely enjoy observing and participating in the learning process in the classroom.
11. Be ready and able to speak to faculty, parents and the board of education on the importance of content area reading.
12. Be aware of the needed skills in presenting workshops for teachers and be as accommodating as possible in the teachers' time preferences for the workshops.
13. A basic knowledge of the content taught by all of the participating teachers is important.

14. Always appear confident as a professional.
15. Make certain that the teachers know that they can trust you.
16. The resource specialist should have the ability to encourage others to grow professionally. Share your skills with other teachers.
17. Be available and visible to the entire staff.
18. Always be professional in your relationships with faculty, students, administration and staff.
19. Try to maintain a positive relationship with the administration, but remember you stand with the teachers.
20. Be a friend and sympathetic colleague, but at all costs avoid "lounge gossip".
21. Maintain a position of openness, understanding and a positive attitude.
22. Be careful not to overreact to any situation.
23. Give sincere and constructive comments to participating teachers on areas of strength. Do not be afraid to discuss areas of concern, but use tact and diplomacy.
24. Never criticize any department, staff member or school program. This could be explosive.
25. Belong to a teachers' organization, but in a politically divided school, be nonvocal. Know the political climate of your school but remember that your program is apolitical.
26. Do not overrecruit teachers for the program. The program should sell itself to nonbelievers.
27. Know that an enormous amount of time and energy will be required for this project.

28. The resource specialist needs to be organized and to have bookkeeping, secretarial and custodial skills. This is often an all-purpose position.
29. Be familiar with all of the audio-visual equipment to be used in the program. This would include videotape machines, audio cassette players, film projectors, record players and sound slide projectors.
30. Use available resources for models, but be creative in developing activities for specific content area classes.
31. Have a solid background in reading assessment techniques and expect to evaluate all aspects of the program.

V. Organization of a Content Area Reading Program

The type of content area reading program developed for a district or an individual school would depend on the recognized need, the interest of the teachers and administrators in such a project, and in available funds. It would appear that the time is now right to develop this type of a program as educators nationwide focus on the improvement of reading and study skills at the secondary level. The objectives of a good content area reading program should relate closely to any state competency test of basic skills.

We have been fortunate to develop our program with federal funds in an educational climate which allows and encourages innovative curriculum. We feel, however, that it is possible for a school to adapt and develop some facets of a content area reading program, regardless of funding, if the need and the purpose of the program are established and accepted within a school. As a teacher is expected to individualize for a student, so too should a content area reading program be individualized for a school.

The following organizational guidelines are based on our experiences in developing a content area reading program for our district and adapting it to fit the needs of specific junior high schools.

1. Define content area reading - know the specific reading needs of the school.
2. Establish the need and the purpose of a content area reading program in the school. Provide the necessary background experience for all participants. Setting the climate for a content area reading program takes time and should be carefully planned. Emphasize the fact that the target student population is the entire school.
3. Write the program objectives identifying the areas to be covered. Our program included the areas of reading assessment, vocabulary development, comprehension and study skills. These will be discussed in depth in the next section of this paper.
4. Plan all phases of evaluation of the program.
5. Collect all available content area reading resources for a resource center. Provide teachers with a list of available resources in the school and local libraries. The school should have subscriptions to the professional reading journals such as the Journal of Reading and the Reading Teacher. Keep controversial literature out of the resource center.
6. Seek help and opinions from reading experts.
7. Develop or adapt a guidebook with specific and general reading and study skills to be used by the participating content teachers.
8. Plan the workshops based on the program objectives. Invite local educators who make interesting presentations to participate.

9. Be flexible in setting dates for the workshops. Use preference sheets in deciding times and even the type of refreshments to be served.
10. Include all areas within a school for a total reading program. Resentment and problems result if an area is not invited to participate. All content areas, administration, guidance, librarians, secretaries and building specialists could have a part in this program.
11. Get to know the entire faculty and staff immediately, by name, using last year's yearbook if necessary.
12. Invite interested, qualified members of your faculty to present a workshop or be active in planning the workshops.
13. Keep teachers informed of all events pertaining to the program.
14. Avoid competition with the reading department. The content area reading program should be integrated into the school curriculum and should be seen as a reinforcement of skills for those enrolled in reading. Maintain a positive relationship with the reading department and involve them in your plans. If reading is a primary focus for the entire school, the possible stigma of reading class in secondary school may be lessened.
15. Observation is an important aspect of the content area reading program. This is a sensitive area and it takes time to build the necessary rapport and trust between the specialist and the classroom teacher. Observation is often a humbling experience for the resource teacher who frequently observes outstanding presentations in all areas. As teachers in our program become used to observation they appear to genuinely enjoy sharing their classroom activities

with the resource specialist. Ideally this monitoring process becomes well accepted by the participating teachers and the resource specialist is able to offer constructive ideas for reading improvement. Observation should be by invitation. Evaluation and feedback should follow observation.

16. When an outstanding lesson which incorporates a particular content area reading skill is observed, an effort should be made to have the lesson videotaped. Building a videotape library with these skills recorded has proved to be a worthwhile undertaking for us. The tapes have been used extensively in the school and in district and state workshops to show actual classroom demonstrations of content area reading skills. The students also see the tapes and this serves to reinforce the skills that they are learning in the total school reading program.

17. During observations pick up on general school reading and study skill deficits. Make a planned attack on these areas of concern. One area that we have systematically planned for is that of listening skills.

18. For teachers on release time, distribute monthly calendars showing their scheduled release time. This not only helps them plan ahead but allows them to see what times the resource teacher has available for observation.

19. Know and help train the substitute teachers who release the participating teachers. The substitutes have a difficult job, but they are often hired as a result of this experience. (All of our substitute teachers from the first semester Phase II program were hired as regular teachers.) Make certain the substitute teachers

know both the content and the classroom structure of those teachers they release. Keep communication open.

20. Always remember how busy a teacher's day is. Regular communication should be made through the daily bulletins, through memos, and at faculty meetings. Avoid unnecessary meetings.
21. Participate with teachers who are developing other programs and encourage them in their efforts. Don't compete.
22. Do not be assumptive as to the teachers' prior knowledge of content area reading skills. This may be very new to them. Avoid jargon.
23. Initiate an all-school reading break. This brings reading into prime focus even for the non-participating teachers of the ongoing program. Make friends with an official at the post office who will provide your school with undelivered magazines. This will bring most of the faculty to the resource center and the individual reading interests of the faculty and staff soon become apparent. Even though this reading break was not an official part of our content area reading program, it has been a huge success. Through evaluation we have learned that teachers enjoy the break as much as the students do and they now understand their role as a reading model.
24. Plan ahead for continuation of the program.
25. Demonstrate the relationship between basic essential skills test objectives and content area reading and study skills. We have divided the objectives and activities for our state basic skills test departmentally with many departments emphasizing the same objectives to provide for reinforcement. We have devised a screening

test for our students so that all content teachers know the areas of strength and concern regarding the students' knowledge of basic skills. All areas are responsible for teaching basic skills.

26. After the program is established, invite the board of education, parents, the public, and media to visit the resource room and talk with the participating teachers.

27. Just as the resource specialist evaluates the participating teachers, the participating teachers should evaluate the resource specialist and the program. We have used Likert -like scales for all ages of the program evaluation

VI. Program Objectives in Depth

At this time, in Missouri, only secondary English teachers are required to take a course in reading for certification purposes. We chose the following four areas as our objectives to teach content teachers: assessment, vocabulary, comprehension, and study skills.

To assess students, teachers in our in-service program were instructed in the administration, interpretation and cautions to be considered in the use of standardized (norm-referenced) tests. Informal assessment tools, such as interest inventories, the cloze technique and informal book inventories were taught. We have found many teachers assume students know how to use book parts such as the table of contents, index, glossary and maps or charts, but this is not necessarily true. An informal paper-pencil test or a class "Scavenger Hunt" done as an oral class activity will indicate areas of need which must be taught in content classes.

To assess readability of textbooks and/or other materials, teachers are encouraged to use the Fry Graph and/or SMOG readability scale. We do caution teachers that chapters or units within texts may vary greatly

because of the different authors' writing styles. Also student interest in a topic affects the student's ability to read sections of a text. However, by obtaining a mechanical readability score of a text, teachers can make adjustments for students in their classes by using and/or rewriting various materials.

Vocabulary teaching and reinforcement constitute the second major area of emphasis in our in-service. Teachers are instructed to teach vocabulary in three ways: context, structure, and dictionary usage. Prefixes, suffixes and root words common to a content area should be taught so that when a student encounters new forms of a word he/she has a starting point for meaning. As with reading teachers, content area teachers should help students learn to use context to define new words. A dictionary is a useful tool for checking or refining meanings of words. It is of utmost importance for content teachers to build background by teaching technical vocabulary and concepts to students. Teachers must also remember to teach non-technical vocabulary which may have a special meaning for their area, i.e., compound. Consider: in English we have compound words; in Science a chemical compound; in Social Studies a compound is a fortified area; in Industrial Arts one might use a rubbing compound or in Health one might discuss a compound fracture. Shades of meaning must be taught.

Once vocabulary has been taught, it is imperative that this vocabulary be reinforced if it is to be learned. Paper-pencil exercises such as crosswords, acrostic or Seek-and-Find puzzles may be used. Take-offs of TV game shows such as Bingo, Concentration, or Gambit may also be used successfully with classes to reinforce vocabulary.

Content area teachers are made aware of the three levels of comprehension skills--literal, inferential and applied. Teachers are shown how to use study guides to get students involved in reading and thinking at the various levels of comprehension. Suggestions are given to teachers in the area of writing questions to get students interacting with print at the various levels of comprehension.

The fourth area is study skills which must be taught to students. The use of book parts, reading maps and charts, note-taking, listening skills and study techniques such as SQ3R, must be taught to students. Students must be instructed in reading flexibility. We know that an English novel must be read differently than a math word problem. Students must be taught this. We feel flexibility in reading is more important than rate for most junior high students.

We also encourage teachers to use the newspaper in their content classrooms. This tool can enrich and supplement all content areas.

To pull together vocabulary, comprehension, and study skills, teachers are encouraged to use the format of the Directed Reading Activity. The format of supplying background information, vocabulary and purpose, followed by reading, comprehension checks and building related skills is much more effective in creating an environment for learning than is giving the assignment "Read Chapter 2 and answer the questions at the end of the chapter"!

VII. Strengths of the Program: After the Fact

1. A large percentage of the junior high teachers in our district have participated in the content area reading program. The consistent teaching of reading and study skills throughout the schools and the placing of reading in prime focus, appear to be having a positive effect on our students.

2. The change in teacher attitude toward reading is seen as the most significant factor as the program evolves. Reading is now seen, by most, as a process to be integrated with content. Further, teaching reading and study skills does not detract but enhances the content curriculum.
3. Dissemination - While theory and means of implementing content area reading skills are available in textbooks and journal articles, it is the application of this theory that we have attempted. Teachers need to know this works in the real world. We are helping the content teachers write the activities that they have developed in the program for their specific professional journals.
4. The program has brought to gether teachers of different disciplines from different schools. We have all shared an experience of professional growth.
5. The newspaper has become an important resource in many content classes. Newspapers permit teachers to have a current source of information for student use.
6. In April, 1978, Missouri's basic skills test (Basic Essential Skills Test) was administered to all 8th grade students in Columbia. 94% of those Columbia students taking the test passed. It is our belief that increased teaching of reading skills in all content areas has improved student skills.
7. Classroom observations have helped the building resource teachers identify areas of skill need within the school. Working with the teachers has provided an opportunity to develop activities to remediate these deficiencies at the all-school level.

8. Evaluation teams sent out by the State Department of Education have highly commended this program. This program has been recommended for presentation at numerous conferences.

VIII. Concerns of the Program

1. It is important to arrive at a workable definition of Content Area Reading prior to starting a program. Although we had our definition and objectives written at the onset of the program, we feel more initial emphasis would have helped our teachers in understanding their role in content area reading.
2. Program evaluation is also an area of concern. Our program is one of teacher in-service. Although we feel improvement of teacher skills leads to students' reading improvement, it has been difficult to find a standardized test for the assessment of students' abilities. It would have also been beneficial to have developed and administered an instrument to measure changes in students' attitudes.
3. Another area of concern is continuation of the program after the federal funding has stopped. Although we feel attitudinal changes will remain with trained staff members, the new staff personnel will not have the opportunity to participate in the training. There will be no funds available for building resource persons either.

IX. Summary and Conclusion

As we begin the last year of our content area reading program, it is important to think about the impact the project is having on our district, and specifically on each school. The future direction of the program should now be brought into focus.

A majority of the junior high school teachers in the district have been trained in reading skills. During 1978-79, training in content area

reading skills will be offered to senior high school teachers in what will be the final year of the Title IV-C grant.

Many of the teachers in our district have participated in the reading program. Both the consistent teaching of reading and study skills throughout the school and the placing of reading in prime focus appear to be having a positive effect on our students. The change in teacher attitude toward reading is seen as the most significant factor as the program evolves. Reading is now seen, by most, as a process to be integrated with content. Further, teaching reading and study skills does not detract from but enhances content curriculum. Activities relating to the state basic essentials test objectives appear to be best taught and reinforced through the content areas.

We hope that the need and the purpose of content area reading have been established and that our district and individual schools will adapt most facets of the program when it is no longer federally funded. As the program develops we have become even more convinced that reading can and should be taught in the content area. We are optimistic about the future of content area reading at the secondary level.

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Resources for Content Area Reading

The materials listed below have been useful in developing our content area reading program. The list contains both general and specific content area reading resources.

Aaron, I. E., Checklist of Teacher Practices in a Good Reading Program in Grades 1-12: University of Georgia.

Bammam, Henry A., Ursula Hogan, and Charles E. Green, Reading Instruction in the Secondary School. New York: David McKay Company, Inc., 1961.

Burmeister, Lou E., Reading Strategies for Secondary School Teachers. ~~Menlo Park, California~~ Reading, Massachusetts: Addison-Wesley Publishing Co., 1978.

Cramer, Ward, Reading Beyond the Headlines: What's in a Newspaper for You. Portland, Maine: J. Weston Walch.

Early, Richard, Teaching Reading and Mathematics. Newark, Delaware: International Reading Association, 1976.

Edwards, D. Lewis, Concept of Reading Inventory, 1960.

Fay, Leo, Reading in the Content Areas. Newark, Delaware: International Reading Association, 1975.

Heilman, Arthur, Principles and Practices of Teaching Reading. Columbus, Ohio: Charles E. Merrill Publishing Company, 1972.

Herber, Harold Ed., Developing Study Skills in Secondary Schools. Newark, Delaware: International Reading Association, 1965.

Herber, Harold Ed., Success with Words. New York: Scholastic Book Services, 1973.

Herber, Harold ed., Teaching Reading in Content Areas, Englewood Cliffs, New Jersey: Prentice Hall, Inc., 1970.

Karlin, Robert, Teaching Reading in High School, Indianapolis, Indiana: Bobbs-Merill, 1964.

Laffy, James L. Ed., Reading in the Content Areas. Newark, Delaware: International Reading Association, 1972.

Olson, Arthur and Wilber Ames, Teaching Reading Skills in Secondary Schools. Scranton: Intext Educational Publishers, 1972.

Peters, Bernard and Bernard Schepers, Reading Handbook for Secondary Classroom Teachers, Excelsior, Minnesota: Minnetonka Schools District, 1966.

Piercy, Dorothy, Reading Activities in Content Areas. Rockleigh, New Jersey: Allyn and Bacon, Inc., 1976.

Preston, Ralph, New Look at Reading in the Social Studies. Newark, Delaware: International Reading Association, 1969.

Robinson, H. Alan, Fusing Reading Skills and Content, Newark, Delaware: International Reading Association, 1969.

Robinson, H. Alan, Teaching Reading and Study Strategies: the Content Areas. Boston, Massachusetts: Allyn and Bacon Inc., 1975.

Shepard, David, Comprehensive High School Reading Methods. Columbus, Ohio: Charles E. Merrill Publishing Company, 1973.

Smith, James A., Adventures in Communication, Boston, Massachusetts: Allyn and Bacon, Inc., 1972.

Thelen, Judith, Improving Reading in Science, Newark, Delaware: International Reading Association, 1976.

Thomas, Ellen L. and H. Alan Robinson, Improving Reading in Every Class. Boston, Massachusetts: Allyn and Bacon, Inc., 1972.

Strang, Ruth, Constance McCullough and Arthur Traxler, The Improvement of Reading. New York: McGraw-Hill, 1967.

Viox, Ruth G., Evaluating Reading and Study Skills in the Secondary Classroom: A Guide for Content Teachers. Newark, Delaware: International Reading Association, 1968.

Weiss, M. Jerry, Reading in the Secondary Schools. New York: Odyssey Press, 1961.

White, Catherine, Listen and Read Lesson Book EA. Huntington, New York: EDL/McGraw-Hill, 1966.

Zintz, Miles V., Corrective Reading. Dubuque, Iowa: William C. Brown Co., Publishers, 1972.

Cassette Tapes - Selected topics in a series of audio-tape cassettes. These were developed for inservice education for elementary teachers and are available through the University of Missouri, Columbia Office of Continuing Professional Education, College of Education and University Extension Division.

Dr. Richard Robinson

#2 Directed Reading Lesson

#6 Reading Skills and Techniques useful in Concent Teaching

#7 Improvement of Comprehension Skills

#8 Uses and Misuses of Standardized Reading Tests

#9 Classroom Teacher and Informal Diagnosis of Reading Problems

#10 Parents and Reading

#15 Gifted Child and Classroom Activities

#17 Disadvantaged Reader

#18 Use of Library and Reading Development

#19 SSR. Book Reports etc.

Dr. A. Sterl Artley

#20 Nature of Psycholinguistics and the Reading Act

#22 Concepts and Reading Comprehension

#24 Reading - A Search for Meaning

#25 Other Word Identification

Dr. Linnea Lilja

#26 Creative Reading

#27 Creative Reading I

#28 Creative Reading II

#29 Creative Reading

Dr. Irene Fitzgerald

#30 Missouri Literary Heritage for Children and Youth I

#31 Missouri LIterary Heritage for Children and Youth II

Dr. Veralee Hardin

#32 Informal Reading Diagnosis

Set of tapes by Dr. Peter Hasselriis which deal with assessment techniques are available through the Missouri State Department of Education:

Cloze Procedure

1 - 5 - 10 Procedure

Readability Formulae

Informal Classroom Inventory

Set of Books:

Teaching Teen Reading Series - Ohio State Department of Education

#1 - Assessment of Print Materials

#2 - Assessment of Student Groups

#3 - Literal Comprehension in Content Areas

#4 - Interpretive Comprehension in Content Areas

#5 - Vocabulary Development through Word Recognition Skills

#6 - Vocabulary Development through Word Meaning

#7 - Sequence of the Reading Lesson

#8 - Individualization in the Content Areas

#9 - Uses of Reading and Study Skills

Films

"Reading in the Content Area" Harold Herber, Syracuse University

Film #1 "Preparation" 22 minutes

Film #2 "Process" 26 minutes

These films may be rented or purchased from Syracuse University, Syracuse, New York.

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